

Botswana VNR STATEMENT read by Workers & Trade Unions Major Group

Botswana is known as a great example of post-independence democratisation in Africa due to good governance of natural resources, economic growth and a working dualist legal system. These have improved the lives of Botswana and the country's development, however - significant challenges have emerged.

Botswana is the 4th most unequal country in the world by Gini-coefficient and moved from the second to the first in reported rape incidents. This is exasperated by unemployment and underemployment with 1 in 2 youth unemployed. Social protection remains unequal in distribution, inclusion and access, with shortcomings of meaningful policy interventions for the informal and care economic sectors.

Illicit financial flows, meaningful economic participation and gender equality are examples of a country riddled with complex challenges to achieving a gender, climate and reproductive just democracy.

Multisectoral investments remain limited in nurturing and strengthening citizen participation and more resources are required for SDG implementation and meeting the data requirements to reflect the breadth and depth of experiences of Botswana. A more feminist, equity driven approach to consultation and engaging civil society on the SDGs is needed to guarantee inclusive and meaningful engagement.

In the spirit of leaving no one behind, How can the government strengthen social protections to meet the needs of its people in all forms of work, universal and primary health whilst ensuring gender and disability integration, most especially in rural areas?

Coordination and implementation remain a challenge to meaningfully harnessing the demographic dividend of the youth majority; how can this be improved and followed up on by all civil society to ensure youth creativity, diversity and participation in social participation mechanisms?

How will the government strengthen dialogue, policy and programming on the linkages between human rights and sustainable development for all Botswana, including indigenous people, LGBTI, independent journalists and women?